



# Missouri Department of Natural Resources

## MISSOURI SOIL AND WATER DISTRICTS COMMISSION TAN-TAR-A RESORT Salon A Osage Beach, Missouri November 27, 2006

**COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:** John Aylward, Elizabeth Brown, Kathryn Braden, Richard Fordyce, Leon Kreisler, and Baughn Merideth

**EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS:** DEAN THOMAS PAYNE, UNIV. OF MISSOURI: David Baker; JOHN HOSKINS, DEPT. OF CONSERVATION: Brad McCord; FRED FERRELL, DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE: Dan Engemann; DOYLE CHILDERS, DEPT OF NATURAL RESOURCES: Mike Wells

**ADVISORY MEMBERS PRESENT: SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAM:** Sarah Fast; NRCS: Roger Hansen; MASWCD: Steve Oetting

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:** Davin Althoff, Jessica Bahnsen, Milt Barr, Kurt Boeckmann, Jim Boschert, April Brandt, Allan Clarke, Chris Evans, Noland Farmer, Tricia Jackson, Wyn Kelley, Joyce Luebbering, Colleen Meredeth, Theresa Mueller, James Plassmeyer, Josh Poynor, Jeremy Redden, Ron Redden, Kevin Scherr, Judy Stinson, Ken Struempf, Cody Tebbenkamp, Alex Tuttle, Chris Wieberg, Bill Wilson

**OTHERS PRESENT: DISTRICTS: BARRY:** Marie Iiams; **BATES:** Brad Powell, Joyce Rider-Diehl; **BOONE:** Cindy Bowne; **BUCHANAN:** Bernard Chesnut; **CASS:** Earlene Davis, Janice Fogle, Kevin Reed; Kara Wilson; **CHRISTIAN:** Kat Allen, Justin Jenkins; **CLARK:** Henry Heinze, Roy Stice; **CRAWFORD:** Fannie Lea; **DAVISS:** Tom Lambert; **GASCONADE:** Diana Mayfield; **GREENE:** Deneen Jenkins; **GRUNDY:** John Rice; **HOWARD:** Beverly Dometorch, Roger McCurry; **HOWELL:** Lennie Collins; **IRON:** Ralph Trask; **JACKSON:** Bill Bohnert, Melvin Dickmeyer, Donald Hicks, Calvin Struwe, Linda Struwe; **JOHNSON:** Tom Craig; **LACLEDE:** Jammie Haines, Jim Spreitzer, Mary Jo Tannehill; **LAWRENCE:** Jerry Wrinkle; **LIVINGSTON:** Kevin Hansen, Steve Hopper, David Morris, Tonya Moss, Steve Radcliff; **MACON:** David James; **MADISON:** Harry Robbins; **MARION:** Kenny Lovelace; **MERCER:** Shay Davis, Beth Walter; **MONTGOMERY:** Tom Kramer, Bob Ridgley, Ann Whitehead; **PEMISCOT:** Carol Barnes, Jack Lewis; **PERRY:** Steve Huber; **PHELPS:** Ken Lenox, Paula Wade; **PULASKI:** James Harker, Kassi Thompson; **PUTNAM:** Britney Brundage, Reggie Brundage, Joe Koenen; **SCHUYLER:** Larry Aeschliman; **SCOTLAND:** Doug Freburg; **SHANNON:** Connie Holland, Marti Rose; **ST. FRANCOIS:** Warren Shelly; **STODDARD:** Shannon Lemmon, Amy Simmons;

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**TANEY:** Dean Dunn, Shellia Braden; **TEXAS:** Carl Crabtree, Sandra Wooten; **VERNON:** Margie Campbell, Fred Feldmann, Wayne Harth, Janet Nicholas, Rocky Steiger; **WARREN:** Wilmer Erfling, Ralph Glosemeyer, Chris Merritt, Deb Niederer, Shelly Rowe; **WORTH:** Richard Mullock; **WRIGHT:** Ted Probert; **STATE OF MISSOURI:** ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE: Tim Duggan; DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES: Bill Foster **OTHERS:** MASWCD: Sharon Gifford, Peggy Lemons, Eli Mast; MCHCP: Alan Bailey; MLICA: Eddie Gilmore; NRCS: Diane Bradley, Dick Purcell, Dan Switzner; Missouri Forest Association: Jerry Presley; Northriver Watershed: Robert Bross

### **JOINT MEETING MISSOURI ASSOCIATION OF SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS AND MISSOURI SOIL AND WATER DISTRICTS COMMISSION**

#### **A. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Elizabeth Brown and Steve Oetting opened the meeting at 10:06 AM by welcoming everyone. Introductions of the Missouri Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts Area Directors and the members of the Missouri Soil and Water Districts Commission followed the welcome.

#### **B. FY06 REPORTS**

##### **1. Monthly Cost-Share Usage Report**

Noland Farmer reported that the usage report shows the district's allocations, amount obligated by each district, the percentage of allocation that each district obligated, the amount each district claimed, and the percentage of allocation each district claimed.

Mr. Farmer reported that in this fiscal year (FY07) the districts were allocated \$24,000,000. It is projected that \$20,000,000 of the allocated funds will be claimed.

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Mr. Farmer reported that as of October 31, there had been \$2,900,000 in claims processed. This amount is \$100,000 less than what was projected. The \$2,900,000 was more than the \$2,400,000 that was processed in FY06.

As of November 21, 2006, \$3,900,000 was received in claims, compared to \$3,600,000 for same time in FY06.

### **2. FY06 Cost-Share Evaluation Report**

Noland Farmer presented a review of the cost-share evaluation for FY06 not including SALT practices.

According to the report, \$20,800,000 was used to pay 5,803 claims, for an average cost of \$3,575.76. In FY05 \$20,100,000 was used to pay 5,948 for an average of \$3,377.04. This is a decrease in the number of practices compared to FY05. The 5,948 practices in FY05 saved almost 3,200,000 tons of soil, whereas the 5,803 in FY06 saved 3,400,000 tons of soil. In FY05 the cost for each ton of soil saved was \$6.31, as compared to \$6.21 in FY06. Mr. Farmer pointed out the cost per ton; included practices that are exempt from excessive erosion requirements.

Mr. Farmer stated that approximately 94,000 acres of land were treated in FY05 and FY06. Atchison County saved the most soil in FY06 at 186,000 tons of soil saved at a cost of \$3.94 per ton.

Mr. Farmer proceeded to cover the number of practices that were completed in FY06. The highest number of practices was Tile Terraces at 1,430; the lowest was Forest Plantation at one. The total number of practices completed in FY06 decreased by 145 or 2.5 percent. The most significant difference between FY05 and FY06 was the number Permanent Vegetative Establishment and Permanent Vegetative Cover Improvement practices. Although the total number of practices went down 2.5 percent, the two practices above increased by 18 percent.

Expenditures for FY06 ranged from 39.5 percent for terraces, 28 percent for water impoundment reservoirs, 4.5 percent for planned grazing systems, 8.5 percent for sediment retention basins, 6 percent for sod waterways, 5.5 percent for permanent vegetative cover improvement, 4 percent for permanent vegetative improvement and enhancement, and 4 percent for all other practices. In comparing FY05 to FY06, there was a 3.3 percent; increase in the total of cost-share paid to landowners in FY06 even though the total number of practices decreased by 2.5

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percent. The significant change was less money spent on terraces which decreased by 1.5 percent.

Next Mr. Farmer covered the average tons of soil saved per practice and tons of soil saved per practice for FY06. The Permanent Vegetative Cover Establishment (DSL-1) and Permanent Vegetative Cover Improvement (DSL-2) had the highest average tons of soil saved per practice. The practice with the highest cost per ton of soil saved was Water Impoundment Reservoir. This was because it has a high cost ratio compared to the amount of soil it saves. The cost per ton of soil saved for all practices in FY02 was \$5.44, FY03 was \$6.10, FY04 was \$6.64, FY05 was \$6.31, and in FY06 it was \$6.21. An explanation for the decrease in the cost per ton of soil saved is that in FY06 the average number of tons of soil saved per practices increased by 7.5 percent, while the average cost per practice only increased by 5.9 percent.

Mr. Farmer reported that the change in the cost per ton of soil saved is impacted by soil loss rates on practices approved for cost-share assistance, the annual update of the county average cost for components, and district limits imposed on practices and landowners.

### **3. FY06 Review of Expenses for AgNPS SALT Program**

Ken Struempf presented a review of the FY06 Agricultural Nonpoint Source (AgNPS) Special Area Land Treatment (SALT) expenses. He reported there were 66 active watersheds across the state. There have been 13 completed. Most of the 13 were pilot projects approved in 1997 and 1998.

Mr. Struempf reported that there were 14 districts applying in the eighth call. Of the 14, nine already have had SALT projects in the past, and five are applying for the first time. There was training offered to the districts on October 2 and 5. Mr. Struempf reminded the commission that training was a requirement for districts applying for a SALT. The final applications are due the first part of February and then they will be reviewed, the districts will be interviewed; the applications will be ranked, and then presented to the commission for final approval.

The FY06 AgNPS SALT expenses totaled \$5,759,576. Of that amount, 30 percent was for personnel, 4 percent for administration, and 66 percent for cost-share incentives. Personnel and administrative costs totaled \$1,970, 847. Of that amount, 87 percent was for personnel. Cost-share expenses for FY06 totaled \$3,788,715. Of that amount, 61 percent was for erosion control, followed by 11 percent for buffers. The remaining 28 percent was divided among

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pasture/hayland, animal waste structures, irrigation, pest management, nutrient management, and others.

The number of claims for FY06 AgNPS SALT totaled 1,312. Of that total, 46 percent was for erosion control, 16 percent for nutrient management, and the remaining 38 percent for pasture/hayland, animal waste structures, buffers, irrigation, pest management, and others.

Some SALT enhancements for FY06 were nutrient management training, training on completing applications, the requirement of a landowner meeting, Management Strategy Review performed by commissioners and ex-officials, meet with projects that are within five percent of commission goal, and development of forestry practices for commission consideration.

#### **4. FY06 District Assistance Grant Usage**

Jim Boschert presented a review of the district assistance grants for FY06. Mr. Boschert proceeded to explain how the districts spent \$8,143,032 that was available for FY06. Of that amount, the districts spent \$7,651,332 or 94 percent of the funds available. The district assistance allocation is divided into the following grants: management services, technical services, administrative expenses, matching, information/education, and the district employee benefit grant, which included health insurance and retirement. During FY06, the districts spent 99 percent of their management services grant, 96 percent of their technical services grant, and 95 percent of their administrative expenses grant. Mr. Boschert stated that each district was given a \$5,000 1:1 matching grant. The districts have until the end of January to propose how they wish to spend the funds. If all the funds are not proposed to be used by the deadline, the commission can release the remaining funds to the districts for additional matching grant requests. Of the \$570,000 that was allocated in the matching grant program, the districts claimed \$535,285. The reason for the high amount claimed was that the commission over obligated funds last year in the matching grants program. The total amount received in proposals was \$696,879, of that \$535,285 was claimed. For the benefit grant, the districts claimed 87 percent of the funds available for health insurance and 91 percent of the retirement funds.

Mr. Boschert stated that even though there was \$570,000 available in the matching grant program, proposals were accepted for a total \$696,879. This was because the commission over obligated for the matching grant. Of the \$570,000, \$535,285 was claimed by the districts. It was pointed out that the districts

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obligated 35 percent of the grant for technical personnel and then claimed 33 percent. Only six percent of the fund was not claimed.

The districts used 84 percent of the district assistance funds or \$8,143,032 for personnel, 10 percent for other expenses such as information/education activities, office administration, supervisor expenses, machinery, office equipment, and other items.

Of the \$491,700 not used in FY06 by the districts, \$199,346 was from the benefit grant. Mr. Boschert pointed out that an expansion was approved for the benefit grant for FY06. The expansion was based on a projected increase in the benefits. The commission was informed that the expenses did not meet the projected expenses.

Next Mr. Boschert provided information on the past three years of the benefit grant. Prior to FY07, the projected costs were based on a 20 percent increase in health insurance premiums and a 10 percent increase in retirement expenses. In FY06 there was a seven percent increase in health insurance costs and a decrease in the amount claimed for retirement.

Of the 330 district employees in FY06, 271 received health insurance from the benefit grant. The average cost was \$3,536. For retirement, 95 percent of the employees received the benefit. The average cost was \$1,095. For FY07 there are 312 district employees and of that amount, 253 accept the health insurance benefit and 298 the retirement benefit.

Mr. Boschert stated that FY07 is the fourth year of the information/education grant. The grant was started with a \$250,000 core redirect from the loan interest share program. The districts have never completely utilized the total amount. Mr. Boschert reported that there were 73 districts that have used the grant.

### **5. FY06 District Financial Summary**

Jim Plassmeyer presented a report on the FY06 district financial reports. The information used was received from the districts' year-end financial reports that were submitted to the program office.

One hundred and fourteen districts reported for FY06 a total income of \$12,892,254, which was the sixth year in a row that the districts exceeded \$10,000,000 in their total income. The average, per district, is just over \$113,089,

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the maximum that a district reported was \$353,953, and the minimum was \$39,121.

The majority of the districts' local funds come from machine rental and sales. Machine rental has fluctuated over the past few years. In FY06 machine rental increased by \$294,163 or 34.3 percent. Sales increased as well. It was noted that interest had increased but donation and money from county commissions decreased in FY06.

The districts had \$13,053,030 in total expenses for FY06 and NRCS also spent approximately \$1,500,000 for office space, utilities, telephone, and etc. for the 312 district employees. Of the \$13,053,030 total expenses, 76 percent or \$9,800,000 went toward employee related expenses. Of the \$9,834,799 employee expenses, 73 percent went toward gross salaries and 27 percent toward other employee expenses. This includes health insurance, retirement, the district's portion of taxes, workers' compensation, unemployment, travel, and training. For the past year, total income increased by \$364,987, while total expenses decreased by \$839,495. Since FY94, income has increased by 57 percent and the expenses by 66.2 percent. In FY02, expenses exceeded income for the first time and in FY03, income exceeded expenses. It was noted that in FY06, expenses exceeded income by only \$160,776. In FY06, there were 59 districts that had more expenses than income and the remaining 55 had more income than expenses.

In FY06, 29 districts had 90 percent or more of their funds derived from the state and five districts had 49 percent or less of their funding derived from state funds. There were 11 districts that had over \$100,000 left in their accounts at the end of FY06, and 10 districts had less than \$9,999. Carryover is unspent state funds, local funds, or 319 funds with the majority of it being local or 319 funds. The average carryover for FY06 per district was \$48,794. Over the past eleven years, the average amount of carryover has increased from \$26,958 in 1996 to \$39,569 in FY01 and dropped in FY02 to \$39,210, and was back up to \$43,667 in FY03 and continues to increase in FY06 to \$48,794.

### **C. FY06 NRCS FEDERAL PROGRAMS UPDATE – ROGER HANSEN**

Roger Hansen presented a review of some of the federal programs offered by Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in FY06.

Mr. Hansen reported that the total for FY06 was \$103,444,152. This included technical and financial assistance. This was the first time that Missouri topped \$100,000,000 in assistance. The largest technical assistance amount was \$22,391,657 for the conservation

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operation budget. The salary and support cost for FY06 totaled \$42,969,813. Financial assistance totaled \$60,474,339. Mr. Hansen pointed out that Conservation Security Program (CSP) was the largest financial assistance program that NRCS Missouri administers at \$22,558,180.

Mr. Hansen reported that staffing through the years has changed. In 1996, there were 436 staff; it continued to fall over the next four years to 407 in 2000. Staff numbers then increased to 487 in 2005, as a result of Farm Bill funding. In 2006, there were 456 and in 2007, it is projected to be 428 staff.

Accomplishments for FY06 were 163 comprehensive nutrient management plans written, and 114 applied. There were 679,466 acres of conservation plans written on cropland, and 285,590 acres for grazing land. There were 3,300,000 tons of soil saved and 9,000 acres of wetlands created, restored, or enhanced.

In FY02, Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) had \$9,960,700 compared to \$10,872,418 in FY06. Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) had \$8,233,261 in FY02 and \$19,716,282 in 2006, CSP had \$2,569,414 in FY03 and \$22,558,180 in FY06. In FY06, 1,052 EQIP contracts were funded for a total of \$19,703,503. There were approximately 5,000 EQIP applications received for a total of \$54,000,000. Mr. Hansen proceeded to cover Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program, Conservation Reserve Program, and WRP.

### **D. OVERVIEW OF TRAINING CONFERENCE**

Bill Wilson presented an overview of the training conference. The theme for the conference was "Celebrate Conservation". Mr. Wilson briefly discussed some of the workshops. Mr. Wilson also went over the agenda for each day of the conference. Mr. Wilson reported there was 690 registered, plus 29 exhibitors.

## **MISSOURI SOIL AND WATER DISTRICTS COMMISSION MEETING**

### **A. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Elizabeth Brown called the meeting to order at Tan-Tar-A Resort in Osage Beach, Missouri, in the Salon A Meeting Room at 1:05 PM.



**B. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

Kathryn Braden made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 3, 2006, commission meeting as mailed. John Aylward seconded the motion. When asked by the chair, John Aylward, Kathryn Braden, Richard Fordyce, Leon Kreisler, Baughn Merideth, and Elizabeth Brown voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

**C. REVIEW/EVALUATION**

**1. District Assistance Section**

**a. Cost-Share**

**1. Annual Approved Practice List**

Allan Clarke presented a list of eligible practices for approval. The commission is required by regulation each year to affirm or modify the list of eligible practices available to the districts. The last time this was done was at the November 2005 meeting.

Mr. Clarke provided the commission with the list of practices that are currently offered. The commission has sometimes, in the past removed practices that were not being used. Other times, the commission has left them on the list because they are good conservation practices, even though not often used.

In November 2004, the commission chose to remove the cropland protective cover practice, which was last used two times in FY00 and had previously been used only six times since FY93. The commission chose to keep the forest plantation practice, which had been used, nine times in five years. Mr. Clarke reminded the commission that they did not make any changes last year.

When asked if there had been requests for additional practices, Mr. Clarke answered that he was not aware of any.

Kathryn Braden made a motion to approve the same list of practices for FY07 that was made available in FY06. Baughn Merideth seconded the motion. When asked by the chair, John Aylward, Kathryn Braden, Richard Fordyce, Leon Kreisler, Baughn Merideth, and Elizabeth Brown voted in favor of the motion and motion carried unanimously.

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### **2. Watershed Conservation Section**

#### **a. SALT**

##### **1. Management Strategy Update**

Colleen Meredith presented an update on Management Strategy for the current AgNPS SALT projects for the last six months.

Ms. Meredith reported that both the North Fork of the SALT River and the Hickory Creek have completed goals above the minimum set by the commission for the past two reporting periods and were no longer in Management Strategy. They reduced and/or revised goals and cut personnel funds required with the reduction in goals.

According to Ms. Meredith, the Upper Little Sac River will remain in Management Strategy until the project ends on December 31, 2006. The project met growth for the Spring reporting period but not the minimum percentage.

Ms. Meredith stated that Blackbird Creek was in Management Strategy and had submitted an action plan. The project was at 23.27 percent according to the Spring 2006 reporting period, but was below the 30 percent needed. At the June 15, 2006 commission meeting, the commission approved the addition of the remaining portion of the hydrologic unit in the watershed in an effort to assist the district in reaching their goals. Ms. Meredith stated that district expressed the desire to record progress from the new watershed area from the time the project began, so the final report will be more complete regarding the accomplishments.

Staff will be working with the district on revision their watershed plan.

## **D. REQUESTS**

### **1. District Assistance Section**

#### **a. Cost-Share**

##### **1. Howard SWCD – Reconstruction on a Storm Damaged Terrace System**

Ron Redden presented a request from Howard SWCD asking that they be allowed to approve cost-share to reconstruct a recently

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completed tile terrace system that was damaged by two storm events earlier in the year.

Commission policy states, "That cost-share is eligible when a single storm event causes widespread damage of cost-share practices within the county." The policy continues by stating that the district should document the seriousness and extent of the damage with a cost- estimate. The commission will approve these on a case-by-case basis and limit cost-share to only the components originally cost-shared on. The policy indicates that cost-share is not to be approved for sediment removal. This means the removal of sediment in a channel should be addressed as routine maintenance and is not referencing the removal of the sediment deposited because of the storm.

Mr. Redden stated the practice was completed and certified on April 28, 2006. The cost of completing this practice was \$17,172 and total cost for cost-share was \$12,407. He pointed out the tolerable soil loss was five tons per acre, prior to construction the loss was 27 tons per acre, with an average slope of 16 percent.

Next Mr. Redden discussed the cost estimate. On the state list, the component for terrace construction is by the foot, which is assuming that terraces are being put on fields that did not have terraces before. Because of this, there is not a good component for reconstruction. Also on the state list for emergency conservation program is a component for dozing per hour.

Mr. Redden pointed out that it is the commission's policy not to provide cost-share for mobilization. When asked if the \$420 for the mobilization would be deducted, Mr. Redden answered yes unless the commission directed staff otherwise.

Roger McMurry from Howard SWCD, stated that Howard County is in need of conservation practices because of the soil. He indicated the board was very conscientious about meeting specifications and would appreciate the commission's consideration. Beverly Dometorch reiterated that they had been very conscientious in making improvement in their county, and their cooperators are doing more to conserve the soil.

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In response to a statement questioning the excavation for the tile, Dick Purcell stated their standard does require a top third to about half of the tile trench to slope back. He stated that as far as he knew that was done. When asked what the original cost was for the practice, Mr. Redden answered \$17,172 and the estimate to reconstruct was \$15,089.

Richard Fordyce made a motion to approve the board's request minus the mobilization fee. Baughn Merideth seconded the motion. A poll vote was taken. John Aylward, Kathryn Braden, Richard Fordyce, Leon Kreisler, Baughn Merideth voted in favor of the motion and Elizabeth Brown abstained from the vote. The motion passed.

Steve Oetting commented that since they were discussing a failed DSL-44, he would like to discuss systems that had been in the ground for 10 – 20 years. He indicated they were seeing more requests for the districts to review tile that had failed. He stated that currently there was no program to replace them, because they do not fall under the erosion category.

One option was coming up with the cost by figuring the yardage of soil instead of the foot of terrace rebuilding. He stated that in talking with Mr. Redden, they felt that maybe they could figure the yardage of soil that would take it from a 1.5-foot berm to a two or what the design requires, and try to develop a plan that the commission could approve so that districts could address a problem they are going to see more of. He pointed out that this has to be brought to the commission on a case-by-case basis, and the association and districts that do a lot of DSL-44 would appreciate a ruling that they could bring back to the districts and tell the landowner what can and cannot be done.

When asked if there was a project in Cass County that was a pilot project, Sarah Fast answered the commission had approved a pilot project, but the project was not working the way they thought it would. Mr. Redden stated that NRCS has designed a system for the Cass County landowner and the landowner is looking at the estimated cost to determine whether or not he wants to proceed.

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Ms. Fast asked the commission if they would like staff to work on a tile program or something more formal. Richard Fordyce indicated he felt this was going to be an ongoing issue. It was a consensus of the commission that they would like further study on the issue.

### 2. **Mercer SWCD – Increase the Commission Limit on the DWC-1 Water Impoundment Reservoir to at Least \$10,890**

Ron Redden presented a request from the Mercer SWCD asking the commission to increase the maximum cost-share on the Water Impoundment Reservoir (DWC-1) to \$10,890.

Mr. Redden reminded the commission that this was a similar request from Mercer that was heard in May requesting to increase the maximum to \$10,250. The commission's current policy limits the maximum amount of cost-share a landowner can receive on the DWC-1 to \$8,250. This maximum was set in 1993.

According to Mr. Redden, 346 of the 979 DWC-1s in FY06 had an actual cost in excess of \$11,000. He pointed out that \$11,000 was the very minimum total amount a practice can cost in which the landowner could possibly receive the maximum cost-share amount of \$8,250. Of the 346, 100 of them had costs in excess of \$14,500, which is the approximate minimum total cost to receive the \$10,890 maximum being requested by Mercer SWCD.

Mr. Redden provided the commission with the range of the 346 DWC-1s practice that were constructed with costs above \$11,000. He stated that 633 had a cost of less than \$11,000 and 246 were between \$11,000 and \$14,499. There were 77 that were between \$14,500 and \$19,999, 10 between \$20,000 and \$24,999, seven between \$25,000 and \$30,000, and the remaining six were in excess of \$30,000.

Mr. Redden stated that sometimes the more expensive structure cost more because they are overbuilt so the landowner has a larger pool, not necessarily to address larger gullies.

In order for the technical staff to be more consistent, NRCS changed the component definition this past year to require all their

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field offices base payment on constructed fill quantities instead of settled fill quantities. According to Mr. Redden, the change should have no effect on how a structure is built nor how much it costs to build the structure, but only on how the payment is estimated.

Mr. Redden stated that while the commission's policy limits cost-share to \$8,250 per practice, 18 districts had a limit in FY06 that was less than that of the commission.

Mr. Redden informed the commission that in addition to structures being overbuilt, there is a concern regarding increased liability with the larger structures.

Beth Walter and Shay Davis presented a presentation to the commission regarding how they arrived at the \$10,890 cost. She indicated that the letters that they provided to the commission were in support of the increase. Ms. Walter presented some of the suggestions made by the supporting districts. When asked if Mercer spends most of their cost-share allocations, Ms. Walter answered yes and they received the additional funds for spending over 80 percent of their funds. When asked how they could justify spending more on DWC-1s in regard to the amount of soil saved, Ms. Walter answered that they normally do not have a lot of requests for terraces or seedings. When asked if they had a list of landowners waiting for ponds, Ms. Walter answered yes. When asked if the list is met every year, Ms. Walter answered there was a two year waiting period.

When asked how Mercer requested the support letters, Ms. Walter answered they sent an e-mail to Peggy Lemons asking her to forward it to all the districts.

When asked what NRCS had to offer for gully erosion water impoundments, Roger Hansen answered it is only in EQIP for the outlet of a terrace system, they do not have a stand-alone erosion control structures. Richard Fordyce stated he felt that if the limit was raised, landowners on the waiting list would have to wait longer. Ms. Walter stated the consensus they have heard from landowners was that as long as they are on the list, and they would rather get the 75 percent when they are reached on the list.

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When asked if there was a limit on a terrace per farmer, Ms. Fast answered that some districts set their own limits, but there was not a state limit. When asked if a structure is over \$8,250, they could be built with cost-share if approved by the commission, Ms. Fast answered that the commission can hear them on case-by-case basis and they have approved and denied some.

Mr. Oetting stated he felt that it was a decision that the districts should make as to how they spend their funds. He felt an increase would be acceptable. John Aylward stated he felt an increase would be easier if there was not a waiting list. Roger Hansen stated that from a technical side, the bigger the structure, there is an increase in the hazards and liability.

Kathryn Braden made a motion to increase the maximum cost-share amount to \$10,890. Failing to receive a second, the motion died.

Leon Kreisler made a motion to maintain current policy. Richard Fordyce seconded the motion. A poll vote was taken. John Aylward, Richard Fordyce, Leon Kreisler, Baughn Merideth, and Elizabeth Brown voted in favor of the motion and Kathryn Braden voted against the motion. The motion passed.

### **3. Crawford SWCD – 24 Additional Months to Utilize the DSP-3 for Landowner Whose Original 48 Months Expired After September 8, 2005**

Ron Redden presented a request from Crawford SWCD asking they be allowed to approve cost-share for a DSP-3 for a landowner whose 48 months to utilize his available DSP-3 cost-share had expired earlier in November.

Commission policy states a landowner whose four-consecutive year period for utilizing DSP-3 funds expired on or prior to September 8, 2005 are given an additional 24 months. For all others (and these are landowners whose four-consecutive year period expires after September 8, 2005) are limited on only the 48 months after the initial claim is approved.

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The commission was reminded that this request was similar to the Lawrence SWCD request they heard and denied on November 3, 2007.

Mr. Redden stated that in this situation, the landowner's initial DSP-3 claim was completed in November 2002 and he received \$1,056 on a 17.5 acre planned grazing system. It was noted that the landowner was never approved for additional cost-share during the following four consecutive year period.

The district board's letter did not state that they had sent the landowner a letter indicated the commission's policy change. The letter stated that the landowner wanted to expand his system and that technical staff was working with him, but they were waiting on soil tests.

Mr. Redden stated that if the commission chose to provide this landowner with an additional 24 months, the commission might want to change their policy from a four-consecutive year period to a six-year period for everyone, if the additional time is necessary for someone to realize the economic benefits of the practice.

Fannie Lea from Crawford SWCD provided the commission with more information regarding the request. She stated that after the district received the memo 2006-45 regarding the increase in the acre maximum, letters were sent to landowners who were eligible. After the landowner received the letter, he contacted the office and began working with NRCS who handles the planned grazing system request. On October 11, NRCS met with the landowner to discuss improving his system and adding acres. She stated that due to an oversight while waiting for the soil test, NRCS overlooked the expiration date for the landowner. On November 8, 2006, the error was discovered and the district contacted the program office to see what needed to be done. She stated the district was advised to write a letter to the commission explaining what had happened.

John Aylward made a motion to approve the board's request for the Crawford landowner only. Richard Fordyce seconded the motion.



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When asked who was to blame for the oversight, Ms. Lea answered the landowner could not request anymore because he had reached the acreage maximum, until the new memo was received. When asked if situations like this had been approved in the past, Sarah Fast answered that at the last commission meeting the commission had a request from Lawrence that was denied. John Aylward stated this was a work in progress that was not done. Mr. Redden stated the landowner had a 17.5-acre system and was at the \$60 per acre limit. When the commission increased the limit to \$90 per acre, the landowner wanted to add acres to the system. When asked how many acres the landowner put in the system in 2002, Mr. Redden answered 17.5 and maxed out at \$60 per acre. In response to a question, Ms. Lea stated the landowner did make a request to the district and the NRCS six notes indicated they were waiting on soil test and the expiration date was overlooked. When asked if the landowner was increasing the dollar amount on his 17.5 acres system or was he increasing his acreage, Ms. Lea answered both. Ms. Braden reiterated the landowner had four years to add to his system. Ms. Lea stated it was the fault of the district because the landowner was in contact with the office.

A poll vote was taken. John Aylward, Kathryn Braden, Richard Fordyce, Leon Kreisler, Baughn Merideth, and Elizabeth Brown voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

### **2. Watershed Conservation Section**

#### **a. SALT**

##### **1. Scott SWCD – Request for Variance to the DSL-15 Policy for the Ramsey Creek AgNPS SALT Project**

April Brandt presented a request from the Scott SWCD asking for a variance to the DSL-15 No-Till policy for the Ramsey Creek AgNPS SALT Project.

Ms. Brandt stated the purpose of the DSL-15 is to demonstrate no-till systems of farming with residue management. Because this is a demonstration practice, if a landowner has already tried no-till, they would not be eligible for cost-share assistance under the current policy. She informed the commission that they had approved an incentive payment for this practice, not to exceed \$15 an acre, with a maximum of 40 acres in one federal fiscal year. A

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landowner or farm cannot be approved for assistance for more than two years.

In a letter from the district dated November 16, 2006, they stated they had never no-tilled wheat into corn stubble, but had no-tilled beans. They asked if the landowner would qualify for the DSL-15 No-Till Systems Practice. The district was informed by the program office that the landowner would not be eligible under current policy, because he would have already no-till a crop. The district felt the landowner was trying something new by no-tilling wheat into corn stubble. Program staff informed the district that the issue would have to be presented to the commission to see if they wanted to grant an exception to policy.

According to the district, it is common practice to plant corn (no-till or conventional), followed by wheat (conventional tillage), then no-till soybeans. They indicated there was reluctance to no-till wheat following corn because of the threat of disease pressure from corn residue left on the surface. The district also felt there would be improvements in water quality if farmers were encouraged to do a complete no-till system. They indicated an incentive program that paid a landowner to try the system on up to 40 acres would help overcome reluctance to no-till wheat.

Next Ms. Brandt covered a RUSLE 2 Worksheet comparing two different management options on a Typical Ramsey Creek farm.

In the letter, it was indicated that a board member who had no-tilled corn and beans previously, had recently added 100 percent no-till wheat to his operation, and felt the practice was very beneficial.

When asked how this would work with SALT goals, Ms. Brandt answered that with no-till the project had approximately 1,000 acres and had only completed approximately 47. She informed the commission that she had asked the district what their anticipated use of this would be; they estimated five to ten applications with the 40-acre limit, so approximately 200 to 400 acres. When asked how much the landowner receives, Ms. Brandt answered \$15 per acre for two years.

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Baughn Merideth made a motion to approve the request. John Aylward seconded the motion. When asked by the chair, John Aylward, Kathryn Braden, Richard Fordyce, Leon Kreisler, Baughn Merideth, and Elizabeth Brown voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

### **E. REPORTS**

#### **1. University of Missouri**

Dave Baker invited the commission to attend the extension meeting at the Training Conference. He presented the commission with a copy of the revised role and function of the Soil and Water Secretary as they see it.

Mr. Baker announced that Dr. Michael Ouart was the new Extension Director. He took his post on November 27, 2006. Mr. Barker invited the commission to visit the campus to meet with Mr. Ouart.

Mr. Baker stated they were in the process of developing an evaluation form used in Northwest Missouri for people who had attended grazing schools. He indicated that hoped to have the information available by the summer.

#### **2. Department of Agriculture**

Dan Engemann reminded the commission that at the last meeting Matt Boatright had informed them about the livestock systems grant program. The application process ended November 17, 2006. They received 8,000 from 30 counties, for over 64,000 animals, with beef cattle leading.

Mr. Engemann informed the commission about the Governor's Conference of Agriculture, which will be held December 10 and 11.

#### **3. Department of Conservation**

Brad McCord stated that there was a record deer harvest this season. He stated there was over 600,000 deer hunters across the state.

Mr. McCord informed the commission that CREP sign up was in progress.

#### **4. Staff**

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Bill Wilson informed the commission the there would be a CREP workshop at the training conference.

Elizabeth Brown encouraged everyone to attend as many workshops as they could.

Mr. Wilson introduced Jessica Bahnsen the new Public Information Specialist who started in September.

**F. DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS**

The date of the next commission meeting was set for Wednesday, January 17, 2007, beginning at 8:00 at DNR Conference Center in the Bennett Springs/Roaring River conference room in Jefferson City, Missouri.

**G. ADJOURNMENT**

Richard Fordyce moved the meeting be adjourned. Kathryn Braden seconded the motion. Motion approved by consensus at 2:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah E. Fast, Director  
Soil and Water Conservation Program

Approved by:

Elizabeth Brown, Chairman  
Missouri Soil & Water Districts Commission

/tm